



AN INFORMATIONAL RESOURCE CONCERNING PROGRAMS, EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES THAT CREATE THE VIRGINIA BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

APRIL 2003

VIRGINIA BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTER
(804) 371-0438 OR (866) 248-8814 toll free
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Small Business Research Center Launched

DBA recently launched its newest resource for small businesses, the Small Business Research Center, to provide economic data, trends, and research for Virginia’s small businesses. The center fills the void of free, readily-accessible and easily digestible information for small businesses regarding how economic conditions may affect their day-to-day operations. A special emphasis is placed on demonstrating the impact of economic indicators on small businesses and showing them how they can use indicators to assess future business conditions to make better decisions. The first lesson on this topic is now available in **Jay’s Classroom**, named after Jay

Ruehrmund, DBA’s Research Director, at www.dba.state.va.us/virginia/research. Additional areas of research will include industry trend reports highlighting business opportunities in nontraditional industries and regional reports detailing the economic environment for small businesses in each area of the state. Research reports and data are available on DBA’s web site at www.dba.state.va.us and through DBA’s Virginia Business Information Center, which can be reached at 371-0438 or toll-free at 1-866-248-8814 for businesses outside of the Richmond area. Email inquiries can be directed to VBIC@dba.state.va.us.

FEATURED CLIENTS

Recent announcements of new industries locating in the Southwest Region are bright spots for the area’s economy.

AFG INDUSTRIES, one of the largest glass manufacturers in North America, will locate a new glass coating operation in Washington County, creating 80 new jobs. The company will build a 150,000 sq. ft. facility in Oak Park Center for Business and Industry located in Abingdon. This new facility will allow the company to coat residential and commercial windows to reduce energy costs and improve comfort. AFG coatings are also applied to front surface mirrors, touch panels, plasma displays and solar panels.

HARVEST PHARMACEUTICALS INC. announced their newly-formed pharmaceutical sales and distribution company will locate a marketing call center and warehouse/distribution facility in the Town of Independence in Grayson County. The company plans to create 30 new jobs.

DBA will assist both companies with customized recruitment and training support.

In addition to these new industries moving into the Southwest Region, existing companies are benefiting from DBA’s **Small Business New Jobs Program** and existing worker **Retraining Program**. The recently introduced programs are positively impacting Southwest Virginia companies. In the area, nine businesses are enrolled in the Small Business Program and four companies are utilizing the Retraining Program.

Recognizing the Importance of Virginia Businesses

By Governor Mark R. Warner



As I write this, our Commonwealth, our country, and our world continue to face challenging times. Across this country, Americans pray for those in our armed forces. Here at home, concerns about domestic security remain in our minds. And the uncertainty over how to pay the bills continues to trouble the hearts of too many Americans. Over the last few years, Virginia has confronted a number of challenges - including fiscal constraints, natural disasters, plant closings, and now sending our reservists and troops off to war. But in every instance, I have seen the strength and ingenuity of Virginians on display.

In the last year and a half, we have embarked upon a long-term plan to reform state government, to streamline programs, and to make smart investments. These reforms will protect our tradition of fiscal integrity, and save money - freeing up resources that we

can dedicate to our most pressing priorities. If we can achieve reforms now when times are tough, we will position Virginia to emerge from the national economic slump stronger and better prepared.

We will be able to continue building a better future because the state of our Commonwealth is strong - and its foundation is solid. This stability comes from not only the robust character of our citizens, but also from our steady, diverse, and resilient business community.

There are over 272,000 business establishments in Virginia employing 3.4 million people and contributing over \$31 billion in gross wages to our economy. While the contributions and impact of our businesses can be seen every day, the Commonwealth has set aside May 11-17, 2003 as Business Appreciation Week to publicly recognize their efforts

BUSINESS APPRECIATION WEEK
Success Starts Here



Small Business New Jobs Program

DBA's Small Business New Jobs Program facilitates and funds workforce training for Virginia companies which are:

- For-profit,
- Have been in operation in Virginia for a minimum of one year prior to application date,
- And have 200 employees or less companywide.

Eligible companies must be creating at least five (5) net new jobs and must be making at least \$100,000 new capital investment. Companies must also be paying at least \$8.00 per hour entry level wage, with exceptions allowed for cities and counties that have an unemployment level of at least two times the state level of unemployment. Only full-time jobs qualify for reimbursement.

To learn more about DBA's workforce services programs, please call (804) 371-8120 or email chart@dba.state.va.us.

Advisory Council Formed for Women’s Business Issues

Due to the increasingly vital role women and minority-owned firms play in Virginia’s economy, DBA has created the Director’s Advisory Council on Women’s Business. The 16-member work group is charged with evaluating the needs and challenges facing Virginia women-business owners. The Advisory Council’s goal is to make recommendations to DBA as to future initiatives that would best promote the growth and success of this fast-growing sector of the Virginia economy.

Last fall, Governor Warner issued Executive Order 29 on Equal Opportunity in State Procurement, which focuses on assuring the best opportunities for small, women, and minority business owners. He later issued Executive Order 35, establishing the Governor’s Advisory Commission on Minority Business Enterprise. As a parallel to the Governor’s related initiatives, DBA is eager for the Commonwealth to explore the challenges facing Virginia women business owners and establish initiatives that best serve this group.

According to a 2002 study conducted by the Center for Women’s Business Research, there are almost 149,000 women-owned firms in Virginia, comprising 30% of privately held companies in the state. This study also documents that sales and employment rates of Virginia women-owned firms exceed statistics for the national averages.

DBA’s Advisory Council on Women’s Business has a six-

month work plan and is targeting September 2003 for presenting its exploration summary and key recommendations to DBA and the Warner administration. A list of the Council members can be found at www.dba.state.va.us/about/boards.asp.

New Look for DBA Web Site

DBA is pleased to announce the restructuring of its web site in a format that is more easily navigated by our clients. The site now features direct links to the [Virginia Business Information Center](#), which includes DBA’s [Small Business Research Center](#) and the [Business Research Center](#). Businesses can also access the [Business Launch Pad](#), [Small Business Incubator](#) information, information on DBA’s [Existing Business Services](#), and a regionalized listing of [Counseling Resources](#) that provide free counseling and low-cost classes to small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The site also includes a live feed of [stock market indices](#) and a link to [VA Newswire’s](#) most current newsletter, featuring Virginia’s latest weekly business headlines.

Governor Activates Emergency Preparedness Hotline

Governor Warner has activated a [Public Inquiry Center](#) to handle calls from citizens

about emergency preparedness. The line will operate 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and can be reached at 1-866-880-4280. Information is also available at www.vaemergency.com.

PLEASE LET US KNOW

If you no longer wish to receive Inside Virginia, would be willing to receive it electronically, or if you have a former colleague who still receives mailings and needs to be removed, email changes to dmelvin@dba.state.va.us

GOVERNOR WARNER CONT’D

and reaffirm our commitment to their success.

The Virginia Department of Business Assistance coordinates Business Appreciation Week in an effort to encourage localities to recognize the importance of Virginia’s existing businesses to the economic prosperity and quality of life that we enjoy in Virginia. Events are occurring across the state during this weeklong Virginia celebration, and I have set aside the entire day of Monday, May 12, to attend DBA’s Business Appreciation Week Kick-off celebrations in various regions of the state.

In addition to participating in DBA’s kick-off breakfast in

Richmond, lunch in Staunton, and an evening reception in Roanoke, I will also visit the businesses of downtown Staunton, Virginia’s first-ever recipient of the Great American Main Street Award. Downtowns are a powerful economic force in our communities and are often one of the largest employment centers and generators of substantial tax revenue. Business Appreciation Week is about recognizing businesses of all sizes in all industries. It is also about teamwork and maybe a bit of fun -- which is why I have agreed to play in the First Annual Business Appreciation Week Basketball Game in Roanoke. Select business leaders and I will take on a few members of the Roanoke Dazzle and other former professional players for what could prove to be a fairly humbling experience.

I hope Business Appreciation Week, and the events or activities being coordinated by your local economic development office or chamber, will be an indication of how the gratitude the Commonwealth of Virginia has for our entire business community. And thank you, Virginia businesses, for your energy, vision, and persistence that keep our Commonwealth racing towards success.

C A L E N D A R

04.11.03	Armed Forces Job Fair
04.12.03	Eastern Shore Job Fair
04.17.03	Marketing Your Community in the Electronic Age
04.22-24.03	Small Business Innovative Research Conference
04.23.03	VRA Financing Workshop
04.27-29.03	Governor’s Conference on Travel & Tourism
04.30.03	River City Express Network Business Fair
05.17-21.03	17th International Conference on Business Incubation
06.03.03	Consultative Sales Techniques
06.04.03	Virginia Economic Development Seminar

Visit www.dba.state.va.us for more details and other events.

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